



Aruba's ONLY English newspaper

U.S. Naval Academy says considering race in admissions helps create a cohesive military

By LEA SKENE

Associated Press

BALTIMORE (AP) — Attorneys for the U.S. Naval Academy say the officer training school should be allowed to continue using race as an admissions factor because prioritizing diversity in the military makes it stronger, more effective and more widely respected, according to recent court filings and testimony during an ongoing civil trial in Maryland.

The group behind this case, Students for Fair Admissions, was also behind the lawsuit challenging affirmative action that resulted in a landmark U.S. Supreme Court ruling last year, when the court's conservative majority prohibited the consideration of race and ethnicity in college admissions.

That decision ended a longstanding practice meant to boost opportunities for historically marginalized groups and sent shockwaves through higher education. But it carved out a potential exemption for military academies, suggesting that national security interests could affect the legal analysis.



An entrance to the U.S. Naval Academy campus in Annapolis, Md., is seen Jan. 9, 2014.

Associated Press

Continued on Page 2

PO-KÉ ONO
By Urvin Croes

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U.S. Naval Academy says considering race in admissions helps create a cohesive military

Continued from Front

Students for Fair Admissions, which was founded by conservative activist Edward Blum, later sued the Annapolis-based Naval Academy challenging the exemption.

A bench trial began last week in Baltimore federal court before Judge Richard Bennett, a George W. Bush appointee who served for over 20 years in the U.S. Army Reserve and the Maryland National Guard.

Witness testimony during the first week of the trial included accounts from current and former high-ranking military officials who expressed varying opinions on how race affects the experiences of servicemembers and the organization as a whole.

Lt. Col. Dakota Wood, a retired Marine Corps officer and 1985 Naval Academy graduate, said racial and ethnic diversity are irrelevant when creating a cohesive and effective fighting force. Wood, who is white, said what matters most is that all members are held to high performance standards.

Capt. Jason Birch, a former Navy SEAL commander who graduated from the Naval Academy in 1999 and currently serves on its admissions board, said his



Navy Adm. Lisa Franchetti takes her seat to attend a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on her nomination for reappointment to the grade of admiral and to be Chief of Naval Operations, Sept. 14, 2023, on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Associated Press

experiences as a Black officer highlight the importance of having people who look like him in leadership — not least because it sets an example for younger generations of minority servicemembers.

He said diversity among U.S. military leaders reflects core American values, demonstrating that if you work hard and perform well, "regardless of your background, regardless of what you look like, you'll be put in a position of command and responsibility."

Birch recounted instances

of racist behavior by white colleagues as well as overseas assignments where his racial identity seemed to garner respect from foreign leaders, including a deployment to Somalia and an international visit to China.

"For decades, senior military leaders have concluded that the fighting force is stronger when it is racially and otherwise diverse at all levels," attorneys for the Naval Academy wrote in court papers. "The Armed Forces learned this lesson the hard way."

The American military has dealt with "internal racial strife that has risked mission readiness since its inception," they wrote, saying the organization has made significant progress but still has a way to go. They said creating an organization that roughly reflects the demographics of the country is an important step toward eliminating internal conflict. The Naval Academy's current admissions process considers many factors, including grades, extracurricular activities, life experience and socioeconomic

status, according to court testimony. Race often plays no role in the process, but sometimes it comes under consideration in a "limited fashion," attorneys for the academy wrote in court papers.

"Candidates are evaluated with an eye towards the myriad ways in which they might contribute to the Navy or Marine Corps as future officers," they wrote. The plaintiffs claim race should play no part in defense strategy or college admissions.

"For most of its history, the Academy has evaluated midshipmen based on merit and achievement," attorneys for the group wrote. "For good reasons: America's enemies do not fight differently based on the race of the commanding officer opposing them, sailors must follow orders without regard to the skin color of those giving them, and battlefield realities apply equally to all sailors regardless of race, ethnicity, or national origin."

They argue that prioritizing minority candidates is unfair to qualified white applicants and that cohesion should arise from other factors such as training and command structure.

The group also sued West Point last year, but the Naval Academy case was the first case to go to trial. □



Republican presidential nominee former President Donald Trump waves after speaking at a campaign rally at Wilmington International Airport, Saturday, Sept. 21, 2024, in Wilmington, N.C.

Associated Press

By ZEKE MILLER

AP White House Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — Vice President Kamala Har-

ris' transition team has reached an agreement with the General Services Administration to accept pre-election support from

Harris reaches agreement on transition planning with Biden administration, no word on Trump yet

the federal government to prepare for her potential presidency.

The agency, which is required by law to offer office space, technology support and other resources to major party nominees, posted the agreement to its website on Monday. The signed memorandum, which governs IT, record-keeping and ethics policies, is dated Sept. 19.

There was no word on whether former President Donald Trump's team would reach an agree-

ment before Election Day. But the agency said it was prepared to provide services to the Trump transition team once an agreement is executed and services are accepted.

Transition planning is well under way across the federal government in advance of the Jan. 20, 2025 handoff by President Joe Biden to Trump or Harris. Last week, Chief of Staff Jeffrey Zients hosted a meeting of the White House Transition Coordinating Committee — the government's

senior-most transition planning group — and for the first time this year included Harris and Trump representatives. And agencies are preparing detailed briefing memos on their activities to share with the eventual winner's team. Teams of federal agents and government workers from the FBI and intelligence community — including some hired back from retirement — are at the ready to vet hundreds of potential transition staff and administration appointees. □

U.S. is sending more troops to the Middle East as violence rises between Israel and Hezbollah

By **TARA COPP** and
LOLITA C. BALDOR
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. is sending a small number of additional troops to the Middle East in response to a sharp spike in violence between Israel and Hezbollah forces in Lebanon that has raised the risk of a greater regional war, the Pentagon said Monday. Pentagon press secretary Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder would provide no details on how many additional forces or what they would be tasked to do. The U.S. currently has about 40,000 troops in the region.

On Monday, the aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman, two Navy destroyers and a cruiser set sail from Norfolk, Virginia, headed to the Sixth Fleet area in Europe on a regularly scheduled deployment. The ships' departure opens up the possibility that the U.S. could keep both the Truman and the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln, which is in the Arabian Gulf, in the region in case more violence breaks out.

"In light of increased tension in the Middle East and out of an abundance of caution, we are sending a small number of additional U.S. military personnel forward to augment our forces that are already in the region," Ryder said. "But for opera-



Pentagon spokesman Air Force Brig. Gen. Pat Ryder speaks during a press briefing at the Pentagon on Tuesday, Sept. 17, 2024 in Washington.

tional security reasons, I'm not going to comment on or provide specifics." The new deployments come after significant strikes by Israeli forces against targets inside Lebanon that have killed hundreds and as Israel is preparing to conduct further operations. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Monday warned Lebanese civilians in a videotaped message to evacuate their homes ahead of a widening air campaign. He spoke as Israeli warplanes continued to strike alleged Hezbollah targets in south-

ern and eastern Lebanon. U.S. officials said a decision is expected soon, possibly this week, on whether the Lincoln will stay in the Middle East or continue on to the Asia-Pacific. Having two carrier strike groups in the Middle East at the same time has been relatively rare in recent years. But as violence has spiked between Israel and Hamas and Hezbollah, both Iranian-backed, the Biden administration has ordered the Navy to have the carriers and their warships overlap for several weeks on a couple occa-

sions. It will take the Truman about two weeks to cross the Atlantic Ocean and get into the Mediterranean Sea. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss troop movements. The State Department is warning Americans to leave Lebanon as the risk of a regional war increases. "Due to the unpredictable nature of ongoing conflict between Hezbollah and Israel and recent explosions throughout Lebanon, including Beirut, the U.S. Embassy urges U.S. citizens to depart

Lebanon while commercial options still remain available," the State Department cautioned Saturday. Ryder would not say if those additional forces might support the evacuation of those citizens if needed.

There is already a Marine amphibious ready group in the eastern Mediterranean Sea, with the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit aboard, which is expected to be able to assist in an evacuation if needed.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin held back-to-back calls with Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant over the weekend as he pressed for a cease-fire and a reduction of tensions in the region, Ryder said.

"Given the tensions, given the escalation, as I highlighted, there is the potential for a wider regional conflict. I don't think we're there yet, but it's a dangerous situation," Ryder said.

The U.S. presence in the Middle East is designed both to help defend Israel and protect U.S. and allied personnel and assets. Navy warships are scattered across the region, from the eastern Mediterranean Sea to the Gulf of Oman, and both Air Force and Navy fighter jets are strategically based at several locations to be better prepared to respond to any attacks. □

Associated Press

Department won't provide election security after sheriff's posts about Harris yard signs

RAVENNA, Ohio (AP) — A local Ohio elections board says the county sheriff's department will not be used for election security following a social media post by the sheriff saying people with Kamala Harris yard signs should have their addresses recorded so that immigrants can be sent to live with them if the Democratic vice president wins the November election. In a statement on the Portage County Democrats' Facebook page, county board of elections chair Randi Clites said members voted 3-1 Friday to remove

the sheriff's department from providing security during in-person absentee voting. Clites cited public comments indicating "perceived intimidation by our sheriff against certain voters" and the need to "make sure every voter in Portage County feels safe casting their ballot for any candidate they choose." A Ravenna Record-Courier story on the Akron Beacon Journal site reported that a day earlier, about 150 people crowded into a room at the Kent United Church of Christ for a meeting

sponsored by the NAACP of Portage County, many expressing fear about the Sept. 13 comments. "I believe walking into a voting location where a sheriff deputy can be seen may discourage voters from entering," Clites said. The board is looking at using private security already in place at the administration building or having Ravenna police provide security, Clites said. Portage County Sheriff Bruce Zuchowski posted a screenshot of a Fox News segment criticizing President Joe Biden and Harris

over immigration. Likening people in the U.S. illegally to "human locusts," he suggested recording addresses of people with Harris yard signs so when migrants need places to live "we'll already have the addresses of their New families ... who supported their arrival!" Local Democrats filed complaints with the Ohio secretary of state and other agencies, and the American Civil Liberties Union of Ohio accused Zuchowski of an unconstitutional "impermissible threat" against residents who want to display political yard signs. Repub-



In this undated photo released by the Portage County Sheriff's Office, Sheriff Bruce D. Zuchowski poses.

Associated Press

lican Gov. Mike DeWine called the comments "unfortunate" and "not helpful." The secretary of state's office said the comments didn't violate election laws and it didn't plan any action. □

Feds bust Connecticut dealers accused of selling counterfeit pills throughout the U.S.

By **DAVE COLLINS**
Associated Press

In a nondescript garage in Connecticut, a New Haven man manufactured hundreds of thousands of counterfeit pills containing methamphetamine, a powerful opioid and other illicit drugs that he shipped around the U.S. and gave to local dealers to sell on the streets, new federal grand jury indictments allege.

Federal law enforcement officials announced the criminal indictments against the man and six other people on Monday, calling the case one of the largest counterfeit pill busts ever in New England.

Kelldon Hinton, 45, is accused of running the operation from a rented garage he called his "lab" in East Haven, about 5 miles (8 kilometers) from downtown New Haven, using drugs and pill presses he bought from sellers in China and other countries, federal authorities said.

Officials said Hinton shipped more than 1,300 packages through the U.S. mail to people who bought the pills on the dark web from February 2023 to Feb-



In this photo released by the U.S. Attorney's Office Connecticut, seized counterfeit pills are displayed Sept. 5, 2024, in East Haven, Ct.

Associated Press

ruary 2024. He also gave pills to associates in Connecticut who sold them to their customers, the indictments allege.

The six other people who

were indicted are also from Connecticut.

Hinton sold counterfeit oxycodone, Xanax and Adderall pills that contained methamphetamine and

protonitazene, a synthetic opioid that is three times more powerful than fentanyl, federal officials said. The tablets also contained dimethylpentylone, a designer party drug known to be mislabeled as ecstasy and xylazine, a tranquilizer often called "tranq."

Hinton and four others were arrested on Sept. 5, the same day authorities with search warrants raided the East Haven garage and other locations. Officials say they seized several hundred thousand pills, two pill presses and pill manufacturing equipment. One of the pill presses can churn out 100,000 pills an hour, authorities said.

A federal public defender for Hinton did not immediately return an email seeking comment Monday.

Federal, state and local authorities were involved in the investigation, including the Connecticut U.S. Attorney's Office, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the FBI, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service and state and local police.

"This investigation reveals the constant challenges that we in law enforcement face in battling the prolifer-

ation of synthetic opioids in America," Connecticut U.S. Attorney Vanessa Roberts Avery said in a statement.

Fake prescription pills containing fentanyl and other powerful opioids are contributing to high numbers of overdoses across the country, said Stephen Bel-leau, acting special agent in charge of the DEA's New England field division.

"DEA will aggressively pursue drug trafficking organizations and individuals who distribute this poison in order to profit and destroy people's lives," he said in a statement.

Authorities said they were tipped off about Hinton by an unnamed source in June 2023. Law enforcement officials said they later began searching and seizing parcels sent to and from Hinton and set up surveillance that showed him dropping off parcels at a post office. Investigators also said they ordered bogus pills from Hinton's operation on the dark web. Hinton has a criminal record dating to 1997 that includes convictions for assault, larceny and drug sales, federal authorities said in a search warrant application. □

University of California accused of labor violations over handling of campus protests

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Faculty have accused the University of California system of labor violations over what they say was a sweep-

ing campaign to suppress pro-Palestinian speech and campus protests across the state earlier this year.

The Council of University of

California Faculty Associations made the allegations in a complaint filed last week with the state Public Employment Relations Board. Faculty associations at seven UC campuses co-signed the unfair labor practice charge, including Los Angeles, Irvine, San Diego, Santa Cruz, Berkeley, Davis and San Francisco, the Los Angeles Times reported Monday.

The council said UC administrators have threatened faculty for teaching about the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and launched disciplinary proceedings for those supporting on-campus student encampments.

The group's president, Con-

stance Penley, described the university's actions as a "relentless campaign to chill faculty's exercise of their academic freedom and to deter them from teaching about the war in a way that does not align with the university's position," according to the Times.

Protest camps sprang up across the U.S. in the spring, including at UC campuses, as students demanded that their universities cease doing business with Israel or companies they said supported the war in Gaza.

California faculty have also been investigated for pro-Palestinian social media posts, arrested for exercising their free speech rights

and were surveilled and intimidated by university representatives, the state filing alleges.

The Times said that months after police cleared pro-Palestinian encampments at universities, the fallout has continued at campuses statewide, with university officials implementing new protest rules and student protesters grappling with ongoing suspensions and holds on their records.

The university system defended its actions. UC spokesperson Heather Hansen pointed to a university statement previously filed with the state labor board in response to an earlier filing by the UCLA Faculty Association. □



Demonstrators gather on the UCLA campus in reaction to the Israel-Hamas war, June 12, 2024, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

Thousands flee southern Lebanon in search of safety and shelter

By FADI TAWIL and
MOHAMMAD ZAATARI
Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Thousands of families from southern Lebanon packed cars and minivans with suitcases, mattresses, blankets and carpets and jammed the highway heading north toward Beirut on Monday to flee the deadliest Israeli bombardment since 2006.

Some 100,000 people living near the border had already been displaced since October, when the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah and Israeli forces began exchanging near-daily fire against the backdrop of the war in Gaza. As the fighting intensifies, the number of evacuees is expected to rise. In Beirut and beyond, schools were quickly repurposed to receive the newly displaced as volunteers scrambled to gather water, medicine and mattresses.

In the coastal city of Sidon, people seeking shelter streamed into schools that had no mattresses to sleep on yet. Many waited on sidewalks outside.

Ramzieh Dawi had arrived with her husband and daughter after hastily evacuating the village of Yarine, carrying just a few essential items as airstrikes boomed nearby.



Women and children fleeing the Israeli airstrikes in the south, arrive at a school turned into a shelter in Beirut, Monday, Sept. 23, 2024.

Associated Press

"These are the only things I brought," she said, gesturing at the three tote bags she carried.

Fatima Chehab, who came with her three daughters from the area of Nabatieh, said her family had been displaced twice in quick succession. "We first fled to stay with my brother in a nearby area, and then they bombed three places next to his house," she said.

Some people waited for hours in gridlocked traffic to get to what they hoped

would be safety.

The Israeli military warned residents in eastern and southern Lebanon to evacuate ahead of a widening air campaign against what it said were Hezbollah weapons sites. More than 490 people were killed in Lebanon on Monday, officials said, and more than 1,240 people were wounded a staggering toll for a country still reeling from a deadly attack on communication devices last week.

That attack was widely

blamed on Israel, which has not confirmed or denied responsibility.

Israeli officials have said they are ramping up pressure against Hezbollah in an attempt to force it to stop firing rockets into northern Israel so that tens of thousands of displaced Israelis can return home. Hezbollah has said it will only stop when there is a cease-fire in Gaza. At a public high school in the capital's Ras al-Nabaa neighborhood, a few dozen men, women and children were

millling around as volunteers registered them. Yahya Abu Ali, who fled with his family from the village of Doueir in Lebanon's Nabatieh district, struck a defiant tone.

"Don't think that an airplane or a missile will defeat us, or that a wounded person or a martyr on the ground will weaken us," he said. "On the contrary, it gives us strength, determination, and resilience."

But Abu Ali also admitted that he was worried about his four siblings and their families who remained behind in southern Lebanon.

"God willing, I hope they will make it out," he said.

Minar al-Natour, a volunteer at the school, said the team on the ground was still in "early stages" of preparations to host the larger numbers expected to arrive.

"We're securing medicine, water, and of course all the essential supplies," she said. In Beirut's Aisha Bakkar neighborhood where some residents had received messages instructing them to evacuate shop owner Mazen al-Hakeem said most had not heeded the call.

"There is no fear but there is anticipation," he said. "People are filling their tanks with fuel, storing food and groceries. They are taking their precautions." □

9 European Union nations pledge to turn the Mediterranean into a green energy hub

By MENELAOS HADJICOSTIS
Associated Press

LARNACA, Cyprus (AP) — Officials from nine southern European Union member countries said Monday they're focused on harnessing offshore wind and solar energy to try to turn the Mediterranean region into a renewable energy hub and stave off the risks of climate change.

The energy ministers of Cyprus, Slovenia and Malta, Croatia's economy minister as well as officials from Greece, Italy, France, Portugal and Spain said in a joint statement that they're working on setting up joint renewable energy projects across borders without the red tape that could poten-

tially repel investors.

They called on the European Commission to head a new study on the region's renewable energy potential on which "informed decision-making and concrete action" will be taken on moving ahead green energy projects. The statement came at the MED9 Energy Ministerial Meeting in Larnaca.

George Papanastasiou, energy minister of host Cyprus, told reporters that so-called MED9 countries are looking at ways of generating green energy from offshore platforms because of the growing scarcity of land in Mediterranean countries on which to build such projects.

Papanastasiou said that some countries have already undertaken offshore wind energy pilot projects

in shallow waters, whose results will be studied by fellow MED9 nations to tailor their own facilities. There

are also plans for wave-generated energy and floating photovoltaic units since there's greater capacity in southern Europe for such technologies owing to abundant sunlight.

Spain's Energy Agency Director-General Joan Groizard said that Mediterranean countries "can and must be at the forefront of the energy transition," because they are the most vulnerable to climate change.

A key challenge to tapping offshore wind and solar energy generation facilities is plugging them into existing onshore power grids and interconnections to transmit to other countries. □



President of Cyprus Nikos Christodoulides addresses the the Summit of the Future, in the United Nations General Assembly, Monday, Sept. 23, 2024.

Associated Press

Cholera is spreading in Sudan as fighting between rival generals shows no sign of abating

By SAMY MAGDY

Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Cholera is spreading in war-torn Sudan, killing at least 388 people and sickening about 13,000 others over the past two months on Monday, health authorities said, as more than 17 months of fighting between the military and a notorious paramilitary group shows no sign of abating.

Artillery shelling hit an open market Monday in Omdurman, the sister city of the capital, Khartoum, killing at least 13 people and wounded more than 30 others, the health ministry said.

The disease is spreading in areas devastated by recent heavy rainfall and floods especially in eastern Sudan where millions of war displaced people sheltered.

The casualties from cholera included six dead and about 400 sickened over the weekend, according to Sunday's report by the Health Ministry. The disease was detected in 10 of the country's 18 provinces with



People line up in front of a bakery during a cease-fire in Khartoum, Sudan, May 27, 2023.

Associated Press

the eastern Kassala and al-Qadarif provinces the most hit, the ministry said.

Cholera is a fast-developing, highly contagious infection that causes diarrhea, leading to severe dehydration and possible death within hours when not treated, according to the World Health Organiza-

tion. It's transmitted through the ingestion of contaminated food or water.

The disease isn't uncommon in Sudan. A previous major outbreak left at least 700 dead and sickened about 22,000 in less than two months in 2017.

Sudan was plunged into chaos in April last year

when simmering tensions between the military and a powerful paramilitary group, the Rapid Support Forces, exploded into open warfare across the country. The fighting, which wrecked the capital, Khartoum, and other urban areas has been marked by atrocities including mass rape and

ethnically motivated killings that amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity, especially in the western region of Darfur, according to the United Nations and international rights groups. Monday's shelling hit the Sabrian market in Karari district in Omdurman, said Mohamed Ibrahim, the health ministry's spokesman. He blamed the RSF on the attack.

It has killed at least 20,000 people and wounded tens of thousands others, according to the U.N. However, rights groups and activists say the toll was much higher.

The war also has created the world's largest displacement crisis. More than 13 million people have been forced to flee their homes since the fighting began, according to the International Organization for Migration.

They include over 2.3 million who fled to neighboring countries.

Devastating seasonal floods and cholera have compounded the Sudanese misery. □

Malaysian police rescue 187 more children as sex abuse probe of Islamic group deepens

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia

(AP) — Malaysian police said Monday they have rescued 187 more children and raided locations nationwide linked to an Islamic business group that is being investigated for alleged sexual assault of children.

National police chief Razarudin Husain said the children and young people, including 59 under age 5, were rescued from welfare homes linked to Global Ikhwan Services and Business, or GISB Holdings. They included a boy who was seen being caned and another child who was seen being stepped on in online videos, he said.

That brought the number of children under age 18 who have been rescued to 572 since the case against GISB erupted earlier this month, he said,

Police also arrested 156 more suspects for investigation, he said.

Police say some children are believed to have been sodomized and taught to sexually abuse each other, denied medical treatment and burned with hot

metal spoons as punishment. Medical screening so far has determined that at least 13 teens were sodomized and 172 children suffered long-term physical and emotional injuries.

The victims are mostly children of GISB employees,

placed in the homes since they were infants and believed to be indoctrinated from a young age to be loyal to the group, police say.

The increased police action against GISB came after the country's king called for a swift police investigation and action in the case, which has shocked and enraged the nation.

GISB, which aims to promote an Islamic way of life, owns mini-markets, bakeries, restaurants, pharmacies and other businesses in Malaysia and abroad. It has its roots in the Al Arqam Islamic sect, which was deemed heretical and banned by the government in 1994.

Last week, police detained members of GISB's top management, including CEO Nasiruddin Mohamad

Ali, two of his wives and two of his children. Some family members of the late Ashaari Mohamad, who headed Al Arqam before his death in 2010, were also arrested.

Nasiruddin earlier admitted there may have been some sodomy cases in the homes but denied any widespread abuse.

Razarudin said there were an estimated 10,000 employees and followers of GISB who were believed to be practicing the Al Arqam teachings. Islamic authorities are investigating, he said.

He said police have raided 280 locations nationwide linked to GISB, but most have been vacated. In 59 of the locations, police seized Islamic books and materials with deviant teachings, he said. □



Malaysia Inspectors-General of Police Razarudin Husain speaks during a press conference in Kuala Lumpur, Monday, Sept. 23, 2024.

Associated Press

Snakes you may encounter on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—If you have ever or will ever go off-roading on the island, you may encounter three types of snakes that are dominant on the island. The Cascabel, Santanero and Boa differ from each other in a couple ways, and local perspective on each one may help you understand what you need to do if you ever were to encounter one during your touring session on the island.

Cascabel (*Crotalus unicolor*)

The small Cascabel or Aruba Island Rattlesnake averages 70 cm in length. The body color is often uniform gray or light brown. There may be a faint pattern of diamond shaped markings on the back. This pattern is most noticeable on younger snakes. The most distinctive feature of this snake is the rattle at the end of its tail which makes a buzzing sound when the snake is alarmed. Cascabels are

shy and not aggressive, but their venom can be dangerous to humans. In fact, it's the only venomous snake native to the island. It is best to leave this snake alone. Do not attempt to catch or kill it, as it could not only be dangerous, but this snake is also endemic to the island, and its preservation has become a legal mandate for all residents and visitors.

Cascabels hunt by waiting under bushes and fruiting trees to catch passing lizards, mice, rats, small rabbits, and an occasional bird. This is often considered to be one of the rarest rattlesnakes in the world. The range of the Cascabel is restricted to the rugged and mountainous areas of the island mostly within Arikok National Park. The Arikok National Park was designated in the early 1980s to include most of the rattlesnake's population, providing a safe refuge in

which the snake can be protected and monitored. The government has also implemented outreach and education initiatives to change local perception of the snake and highlight its ecological and economic importance – it is now being promoted as a national symbol. Arikok's partnership with the Toledo zoo has safeguarded the rattlesnake ex-situ and led to a number of research projects collecting critical data on the Cascabel's abundance, life history and habitat requirement to help guide future conservation efforts.

Santanero

The slender Santanero or Aruban Cat-eyed Snake is a small fella, typically less than 50 cm long. This snake is recognizable by the large scales on the top of its head and by its pattern of dark brown bands alternating with light brown bands. The belly is plain white or cream colored without any markings. Native as well to the island, this snake is shy and not aggressive. However, it has enlarged teeth at the back of its mouth and mild venom which is not dangerous to humans, but can paralyze small lizards and frogs. Santaneros are most active at night when they search for food. During the day, they hide under rocks or leaves. They frequently climb trees and cactus. Santaneros eat toads, frogs, insects, and



lizards. You may find Santaneros near dams during periods of rainy weather or crossing roads at night. This snake is found island wide. A Santanero in your garden will keep away the unwanted insects. If you encounter a Santanero around your garden, please do not harm this species.

Boa (*Boa constrictor*)

Boas are Aruba's largest snakes. The longest Boa found on the island was slightly less than 3 m. Newborn Boas average 35 cm. Boas are not venomous but are what is called constrict-

tor snakes; they kill by wrapping themselves around a prey and suffocating them. The most distinctive feature of a Boa is its pattern of dark brown and tan blotches which become red toward the tail. The belly is white or cream colored with numerous black spots. Boas are excellent climbers and may be found in trees and cactus. Boas also hide in the leaves under bushes waiting to catch prey that pass. Boas catch their prey with their teeth and then constrict it in their coils. The Boa's diet consists of birds, lizards, rats, mice, and rabbits. Large Boas have been known to eat small goats and chickens. When threatened, Boas will hiss loudly.

Boas are a non-native species and are invasive to the island, risking the population of native lizards and birds. The first Boas were reported on the island in 1999. Since that time they have been found across the entire island in all types of habitats. If you ever encounter a Boa, please do not approach it. Instead, please call the Arikok National Park, as they are experienced in handling Boas. □



Aruba: The island of Aloes



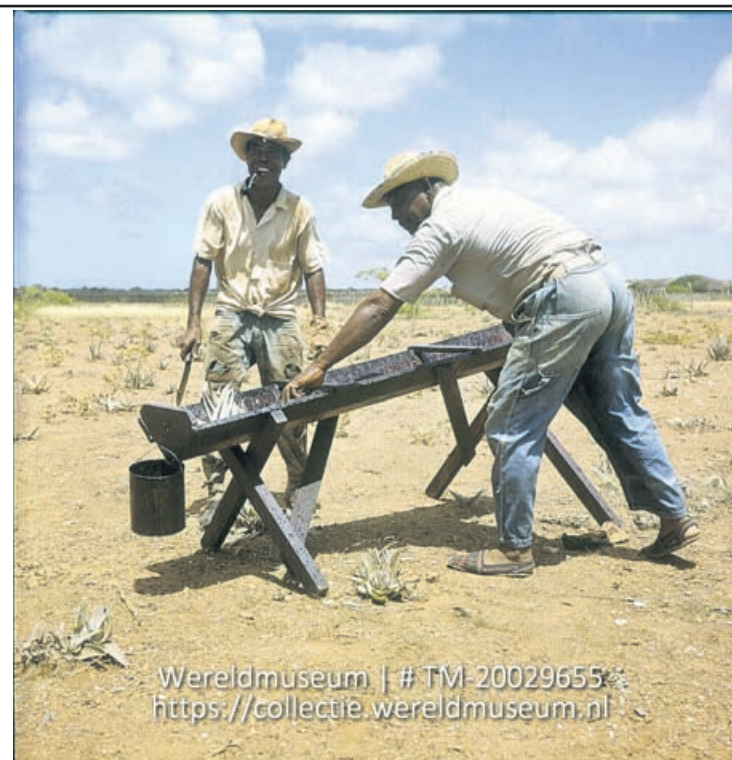
ORANJESTAD – Aloe vera, a succulent plant species, is renowned for its incredible properties for the skin. It is widely distributed and usu-

ally grows in tropical, semi-tropical and arid climates on the planet. But this plant also had a very prominent role in the history of Aruba,

and its significance to the island's economy endures to this day.

The leaves of Aloe vera contain a good amount of gel which when used topically, is great for the skin. Traditionally, Arubans use this gel to treat minor burns and other skin ailments, or just to keep skin supple and looking bright and nourished. Aside from the gel, aloe contains a bitter, yellow substance (called aloin) which is a gentle but powerful laxative, and it is also the origin of the industry of aloe in Aruba.

According to the website of Royal Aruba Aloe, Aloe vera was introduced in Aruba around 1840, when most of the island's inhabitants were farmers of little



means. Dutch Governor Van Raders introduced the plant after it had been introduced in other islands of the Caribbean to cultivate and harvest the aloe to produce the laxative.

Around 1920, about two-thirds of Aruba was aloe fields, earning our island the nickname "The Island of Aloes."

Under Commander Jan Helenus Ferguson (1866-1871), aloe experienced a boom, which is why there is a road named after him, which goes through the aloe fields. In the 19th century, Aruba was the main supplier of aloin for laxative, which was imported abroad to the United States and Europe. The aloin from Aruba and Curaçao was known to be one of the best in the world and was more expensive, which meant that at the time, it had significant economic impact, particularly for the local farmers.

However, by the time the oil industry arrived on Aru-

ba, it changed the labor market on Aruba, shifting away from agriculture. It would be after World War II that aloe would make a comeback. And eventually, as science learned about the amazing properties of aloe gel, the industry shifted from producing laxative to producing skin care. An interesting fact is that in 1951, the production of Aruban aloe amounted to around 30 percent of the total global production!

The impact and relevance of aloe is visible all around Aruba. While most homes will have a few plants for personal use and decoration, houses are also decorated with aloe motifs, and at some point, aloe even featured on post stamps. Around 1920, about two-thirds of Aruba was aloe fields, earning our island the nickname "The Island of Aloes." And in 1955, the aloe became a part of Aruba's coat of arms, symbolizing prosperity for the island. □

Images from the archive of the National Library of Aruba.

Experience Aruban culture with this exciting theme night featuring a Carnival show, mixology bar, local artists and more. You can sample Aruban cuisine, including delicious BBQ options with a tropical twist. A local brass band will be performing, and you can pose with elaborately dressed Carnival dancers for a memorable photo op as well, so don't miss it.

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Aruba Tourism Authority honored loyal visitors at Tamarijn Aruba All Inclusive Resort!

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure of recognizing Distinguished Visitors of Aruba. The honorees were respectively honored with a certificate for their years of visits, loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.

The honorary certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests who have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The three levels of honor are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor (10>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Goodwill Ambassador (20>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Emerald Ambassador (35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

The honorees were:

Distinguished Visitors
Mr. William & Mrs. Robin Gauthier from Waterbury Connecticut, United States.

Mr. Jorgino Willems representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of Tamarijn Aruba All Inclusive Resort bestowed the certificate upon the honorees, presented them with gifts, and thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination, as their home away from home.



The top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by the honorees were:

- Aruba's beaches.
- Aruba is safe.
- "Tamarijn employees"
- "Weatherproof"
- "Never run out of things to do"

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honorees for their continued visits to the "One Happy Island". □

Enjoy one of the best views on Aruba at the top of the Hooiberg Hill



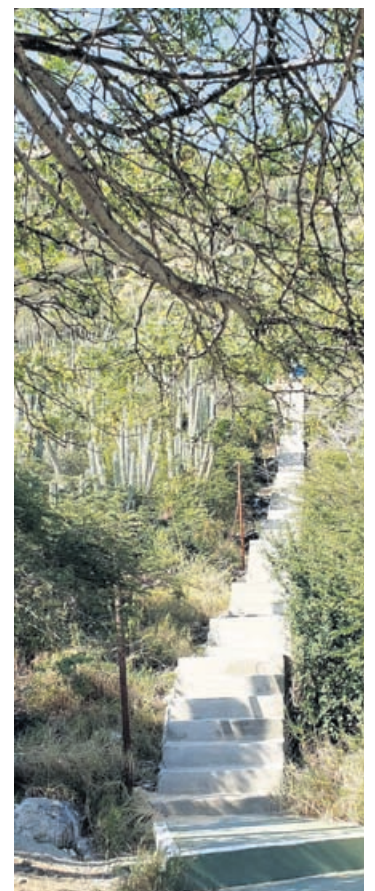
(Oranjestad)—If you are a regular hiker, or maybe want to spice up your morning work out session, then you might enjoy one of the most popular climbing sites on the island: The Hooiberg Hill. Accompanied with a 600-step staircase, this hill overlooks a great part of the island, the Caribbean sea, and sometimes even the Santa Anna mountain located in the coastal state of Falcon

in Venezuela, providing one of the best views you can get on Aruba.

located at the center district of the island, Santa Cruz, the Hooiberg Hill is the second highest point on the island at 165 meters above sea level (or about 540 feet above sea level). The highest point is Jamanota Hill at 189 meters (620 feet), located in the Arikok National Park.

The staircase that run on the side of the hill was first built in 1951, when Mr. Eduardo Tromp constructed it. At that time, the staircase consisted of 900 steps. Over time, as the steps faced erosion, the government decided to renovate these stairs in 1991. This new project delivered the newer staircase with only 587 steps. However, don't be fooled—it may still

be a work out to get on top. In addition, there is now a gazebo placed halfway up the stair for a little rest. The view at this resting stop is also a sight to see. The best time to climb the hill would be early in the morning or right before sunset, as it may not be as hot. However, the hill is of course open all day, every day. □



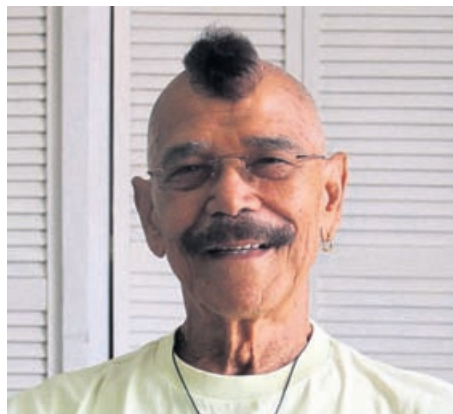
A brief history of the California Light House



(Oranjestad)—At the furthest western point of the island, there lies the tallest structure on the island: The California Light House. Standing on top of a limestone cliff, this lighthouse oversees the entire island, offering one of few best views of the island and the surrounding sea. It is also one of the few monuments that hold a rich history.

The lighthouse was constructed in between 1914-1916, and its first keeper was a young trained lighthouse keeper from Curacao names Jacob Jacobs. Mr. Frederico Fingal was the last man to have occupied this position until 1962. Though his son, Mr. Romulo Fingal did not continue in his father's footsteps, he does have a special connection to the lighthouse. He sat down with our reporter and shared a bit of its history.

As Mr. Fingal explains, "In 1915, cargo donkeys were hired from Figaroa di Noord to help build the Lighthouse at Westpunt. The donkeys had to walk along the beach all the way to Westpunt carrying the cargo, poles, cement, and all these things. At that time, it was a difficult task until Aruba got its first truck. These things reflect how people could have accomplished this tremendous job with so little." Mr. Fingal said, "At that time, it wasn't a place for people to work.



It was very challenging because it was full of goats and donkeys, and it was very isolated. There were no hotels or roads to get there. There was only a donkey trail. Those were the only means of transportation."

Mr. Fingal continues, "In 1939, I was born in the lighthouse, and my father was the last lighthouse keeper until he retired in 1962. After that, they removed the power cables all the way to the top. According to the story, we couldn't have the light ourselves because they dismantled it, and after many years, I heard that it is in a train museum in San Nicolas, where we found this very special lens that, when the light shines through it, it reaches 30 kilometers out to sea." Mr. Fingal told our reporter.

The lighthouse has a long and very interesting history. The reason why the lighthouse was built, according

to Mr. Fingal, dates back to the day when the cargo ship S.S. California sank because of the lack of light. In 1913, Aruba made a request to Curacao to build a Lighthouse at Westpunt, and the governor of Curacao responded to Aruba to come back in 1915 with a well-detailed plan. "During the First World War from 1914 to 1918, they had to wait for the light to be transported to Aruba because it was manufactured in France. At that time, there was no electricity, and the light was very interesting because it rotated with a kerosene lamp that planes used; clean kerosene," Mr. Fingal said.

Mr. Fingal discovered something very interesting about the lighthouse after much research was documented in his book 'History of the Lighthouse at Westpunt.' He found many details: "I found out that the height of the lighthouse was due to the absence of electricity. There was also the presence of coral. There is a long steel cable from where the light is, and under the light, at the highest point, there is a hanging weight, a sort of pendulum that swings like that, with a weight that measures about 1 meter by 30 centimeters wide, which is a block of solid iron attached to a cable. When you release it upwards, it comes down, and the weight that comes down

pulls it up, gradually. And while it comes down, the same weight that is descending causes many small wheels to turn in the opposite direction. The Lighthouse rotates from 6 pm in the evening, when the sun sets, until 6 am in the morning. During the entire night, the light shines on the lantern, it goes down 24 meters, and the Lighthouse is 30 meters high. It is designed not to collapse," Mr. Fingal explains.

Mr. Fingal further explains that in one night, the lighthouse rotates 4,320 times and consumes one gallon of kerosene for the whole operation. "At that time, the kerosene was supplied from the Lago refinery. Every day it was brought down, and to start the light again, they had to lift the weight up, so our job as children was to crank it and raise the weight back up in the evening when the light stuck, they would take it down again, and the light stayed down. That's how it worked for a very long time," Mr. Fingal explains.

Thanks to the Monument Fund Aruba, which worked hard and is currently in charge of the Lighthouse, Mr. Fingal is very happy with its preservation, along with all the renovations that have taken place. He hopes that the story of the lighthouse will continue to live on for future generations. □

Aruba's underwater wonderland

ORANJESTAD - Exploring the underwater wonders is something you should definitely do during your stay in Aruba. The underwater world has everything to offer that makes a snorkel trip so exceptional; an impressive, colorful sea life with exotic fishes, turtles and beautiful coral reef. The historic shipwrecks, located on the Aruban seabed are also worth a visit. Aruba is known for its white beaches and blue oceans, which means there are many fascinating under water spots, where you can take your snorkeling gear and we selected the top spots for you.

Tres Trapi

Tres Trapi means tree steps in Papiamentu, Papiamentu is together with Dutch the official language spoken on Aruba. The beach is called Tres Trapi because it is accessible by the tree steps carved into the rocks. Tres Trapi is a small rocky beach, located on the north-western side of the island, approximately 5 to 10 minute drive from Palm Beach. From the unique steps you can easily walk over the beach into the clear and turquoise blue ocean. While snorkeling you will encounter all kind of tropical fishes and sea stars. The kind of starfish you will find in the Aruban waters is the red cushion sea star. This is a starfish that is commonly found in the shallow waters of the Caribbean sea and if you are lucky during your snorkeling visit to Tres Trapi, you may come across one of the green sea turtles. Respect the animal, keep your distance and enjoy the view. Also remember; it is a once in a life time experience.

Antilla shipwreck

Antilla is a 400-foot-long long ship, built in 1939 in Hamburg, Germany. Antilla came to Aruba, because it

had to find a neutral port. When Germany invaded the Netherlands on May 10, 1940, the crew decided to let their own ship sink, to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Dutch Navy. Antilla lies on its portside in Malmok bay, and the sunken world war two ship is now one of Aruba's most popular snorkeling and dive spots. However, the ship wreck can only be reached by boat. The ship is visible from the surface and during your snorkeling trip you be surrounded by hundreds of tropical fishes, but the ship wreck alone is already impressive enough.

Baby Beach

Baby beach; a white beach, with a crystal blue ocean. The beach is located on the southern part of the island. On the way to the famous beach, you will drive through the old capital of Aruba, San Nicolas. The old Aruban culture can be still felt and experienced here, so do not hesitate to get out of your car and walk around for a while. Baby beach is a child friendly beach, since it is shallow and the water has a pleasant temperature. The name therefore fits well with the beach. Baby beach is an excellent beach for snorkeling, especially if you want to go with small children, because the water remains shallow and there are still many underwater wonders to see. In the ocean there is an area marked until where it is recommended to snorkel and on the beach you will find different facilities. It is a perfect beach to spend your day snorkeling and relaxing.

Mangel Halto

Mangel Halto beach is located in Savaneta, on the southern-west part of the island. The beach is different from the other beaches in



Aruba; it is beach full of mangroves. You reach the beach by a bridge through the mangroves and then you will have several entrances to the sea. There are diverse spots where you can enjoy a perfect beach day, wooden stairs made to enter the water and a dock to sit on and enjoy the view. Mangel

Halto is also worth a visit for the snorkeling experience. Inside the bay, the water is clear and you find many colorful fish. Outside the bay is a bit more challenging for beginners because of the wind and the waves, but the coral is alive and it is just like snorkel heaven. □

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

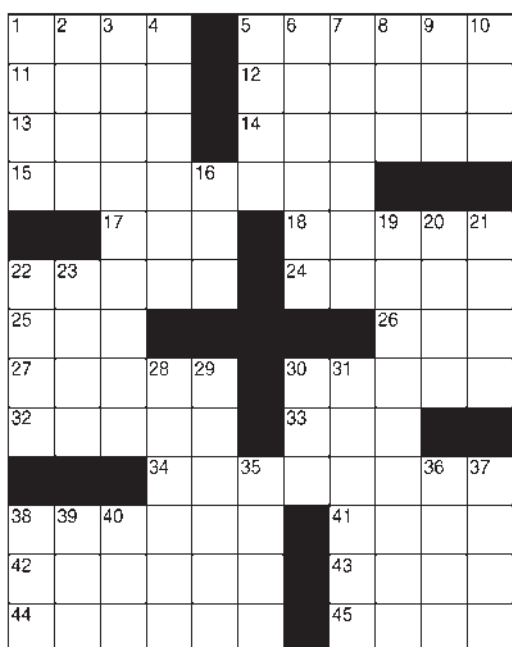
- 1 Make finer
- 5 Salt
- 11 Pale tan
- 12 Duds
- 13 Lewd look
- 14 Spurred on
- 15 It ends when the parachute opens
- 17 Summer sign
- 18 Boosts
- 22 Sound from a smithy
- 24 Singer McLachlan
- 25 Try for office
- 26 Sense of self
- 27 Spanish hero
- 30 Give it —!
- 32 Kagan of the Supreme Court
- 33 Bar topic
- 34 Bahamas city
- 38 Crafty
- 41 Sketched
- 42 Truck fuel
- 43 Radius partner
- 44 Ignores the limit
- 45 Track figures

DOWN

- 1 Introspective study
- 2 Bakery worker
- 3 Like many jobs in the gig economy
- 4 Soup holder
- 5 Long story
- 6 Coral islands
- 7 Romas nation
- 8 Jar part
- 9 Smelter supply
- 10 Stop signal
- 16 Sailing hazard
- 19 Democracies, collectively
- 20 Gift attachments
- 21 Bar order
- 22 Ontario tribe
- 23 Temporary calm
- 28 Fill
- 29 Moved quickly
- 30 Hoppy brew
- 31 OutKast, e.g.
- 35 Snaky fish
- 36 Tear
- 37 "—
- 38 Spots on TV
- 39 Try the tea
- 40 Golf prop



Yesterday's answer



2-29

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

2-29

CRYPTOQUOTE

PMNNE LJDBPIME BG MAA EGF

A R M N A J Z S X L G D Z G Z

WRLDFMDE 29! — WDGU EGFD

NFKKAR WDJRZIX

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: LOVE MAKES YOUR SOUL CRAWL OUT FROM ITS HIDING PLACE. — ZORA NEALE HURSTON

Cruise ship Schedule: September 03 - 24 2024

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
TUE	03	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS CARNIVAL HORIZON	08.00 09.00	20.00 22.00	B C	1 1
WED	04	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	09.00	21.00	C	1
TUE	10	CELEBRITY BEYOND CARNIVAL CELEBRATION CARNIVAL VISTA	08.00 08.00 13.00	21.00 22.00 23.00	B C I	1 1 1
TUE	17	CARNIVAL HORIZON	08.00	22.00	C	1
TUE	24	CELEBRITY BEYOND CARNIVAL MAGIC	08.00 09.00	21.00 22.00	B C	1 1

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basicbut important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

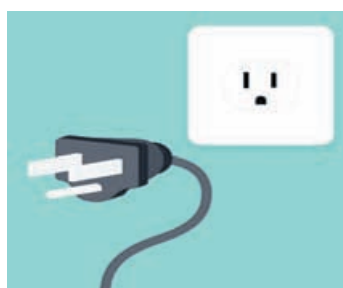
lets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Supermarket hours



Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

Electrical power



Drinking water



The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of out-

Safety



Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

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24/7

'Short corn' could replace the towering cornfields steamrolled by a changing climate



Cameron Sorgenfrey holds a tall corn stalk next to a short corn stalk along one of his fields, Monday, Sept. 16, 2024, in Wyoming, Iowa.

Associated Press

By SCOTT McFETRIDGE

Associated Press

WYOMING, Iowa (AP)

— Taking a late-summer country drive in the Midwest means venturing into the corn zone, snaking between 12-foot-tall green, leafy walls that seem to block out nearly everything other than the sun and an occasional water tower. The skyscraper-like corn is a part of rural America as much as cavernous red barns and placid cows. But soon, that towering corn might become a miniature of its former self, replaced by stalks only half as tall as the green giants that have dominated fields for so long. "As you drive across the Midwest, maybe in the next seven, eight, 10

years, you're going to see a lot of this out there," said Cameron Sorgenfrey, an eastern Iowa farmer who has been growing newly developed short corn for several years, sometimes prompting puzzled looks from neighboring farmers. "I think this is going to change agriculture in the Midwest." The short corn developed by Bayer Crop Science is being tested on about 30,000 acres (12,141 hectares) in the Midwest with the promise of offering farmers a variety that can withstand powerful windstorms that could become more frequent due to climate change. The corn's smaller stature and sturdier base enable it to withstand winds of up to 50 mph re-

searchers hover over fields with a helicopter to see how the plants handle the wind. The smaller plants also let farmers plant at greater density, so they can grow more corn on the same amount of land, increasing their profits. That is especially helpful as farmers have endured several years of low prices that are forecast to continue. The smaller stalks could also lead to less water use at a time of growing drought concerns. U.S. farmers grow corn on about 90 million acres (36 million hectares) each year, usually making it the nation's largest crop, so it's hard to overstate the importance of a potential large-scale shift to smaller-stature corn, said Dior Kelley, an assistant professor at Iowa State University who is researching different paths for growing shorter corn. □

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Editors

Pilar Flores
Richard Brooks
Angenette Figuereo

Sales

Mark Gomes
Sulaika Croes

Classifieds

classified@cspnv.com

Distribution and Collection

accounting@bondia.com

Social / Website

Juan Luis Pinto

Weststraat 22
T: 582-7800
E: news@arubatoday.com
W: www.arubatoday.com
f @arubatoday

The benefits of a four-day workweek according to a champion of the trend

By **CATHY BUSSEWITZ**
AP Business Writer

Companies exploring the option of letting employees work four days a week hope to reduce job burnout and retain talent seeking a better work-life balance, according to the chief executive of an organization that promotes the idea. The trend is gaining traction in Australia and Europe, says Dale Whelehan, CEO of 4 Day Week Global, which coaches companies through the months-long process of shortening their employees' work hours. Japan launched a campaign in August encouraging employers to trim work schedules to four days.

American companies haven't adopted four-day weeks as broadly, but that could change. Eight percent of full-time employees polled by Gallup in 2022 said they work four days a week, up from 5% in 2020. The Associated Press spoke with Whelehan about the reasons why companies might want to consider the change. His comments have been edited for length and clarity.

Q: Why should organizations switch to a four-day workweek?

A: The bigger question is, why shouldn't they? There's a lot of evidence to suggest



(Associated Press Illustration/Jenni Sohn)

we need to do something fundamentally different in the way we work. We have issues of burnout. We have a recruitment and retention crisis in many industries. We have increased stress within our workforce, leading to health issues, issues with work-life balance, work-family conflict. We have people sitting in cars for long periods, contributing to a climate crisis. We have certain parts of the population that are able to work longer hours and therefore be rewarded for that, creating further in-

equity within our societies. Lastly, we look at the implications that stress actually has on long-term health. We know that it's linked to issues like cardiovascular disease, to cancer, to diabetes. So stress is something not to be taken lightly, and it's only rising in our world of work.

Q: Why is the 40-hour workweek so common?

A: To understand where we are now, let's take a step back into pre-industrial times. My granddad was a farmer, worked seven days a week and was required

on-site all the time. It was a lot of long hours, but also he had a lot of autonomy. By the time my dad entered the workforce, he was a technician in a mechanical role. And he was expected to produce products on a large scale. As a result he wasn't given the rewards from farming, but was given a salary. That change from my grandfather's time to my dad's brought about the birth of a discipline known as management. And management, led by Frederick Taylor, was looking at the rela-

tionship between fatigue and performance.

A lot of scientific studies were done to try to understand that relationship, leading to the need for a five-day week as opposed to a six-day week. By the time I entered into the workforce, we no longer had a very physical, laborious workforce. It's highly cognitive and highly emotional.

The fundamental physiological difference is that our brain as a muscle can't withstand the same level of hours of work as our muscles in our body might be able to. So it's that mismatch between an outdated work structure of 40 hours, rooted in very physical labor, and what is now a highly cognitive workforce.

Q: How can companies increase revenue while employees work fewer hours?

A: The reduction of working time brings about productivity gains by people having naturally more time to rest and recover, allowing them to come back into a new week more engaged and well-rested. That's one way in which you see productivity gains.

The second is the fundamental shift that organizations undergo while transitioning to a four-day week. □

California sues ExxonMobil and says it lied about plastics recycling

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — California sued ExxonMobil Monday, alleging it de-

ceived the public for half a century by promising that recycling would address

the global plastic pollutions crisis.

Attorney General Rob Bonta's office said that even with recycling programs, less than 5% of plastic is recycled into another plastic product in the U.S. even though the items are labeled as "recyclable." As a result, landfills and oceans are filled with plastic waste. ExxonMobil did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Bonta, a Democrat, said a coalition of non-profit environmental organizations has filed a similar lawsuit against the oil giant, which is one of the world's largest producers of plastics. The

state's lawsuit is a separate action. Both suits allege ExxonMobil misled the public through statements and slick marketing campaigns. Bonta's office said in a statement that the attorney general hopes to compel ExxonMobil to end its deceptive practices and to secure an abatement fund and civil penalties for the harm. "For decades, ExxonMobil has been deceiving the public to convince us that plastic recycling could solve the plastic waste and pollution crisis when they clearly knew this wasn't possible," Bonta said in a statement.

"ExxonMobil lied to further

its record-breaking profits at the expense of our planet and possibly jeopardizing our health," he said.

On Sunday, California Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom signed into law a ban on all plastic shopping bags at supermarkets. ExxonMobil knew that plastic is "extremely costly and difficult to eradicate" and that plastic disintegrates into harmful microplastics, yet it promoted recycling as a key solution through news and social media platforms, according to the lawsuit. At the same time, it ramped up production of plastics, the lawsuit states. □



An ExxonMobil fuel storage and distribution facility in Irving, Texas, Wednesday, Jan. 25, 2023.

Associated Press

Dubois changes perceptions and muscles onto the top table of heavyweights. He wants Usyk next

By **STEVE DOUGLAS**
AP Sports Writer

Tyson Fury looked as stunned as everyone else inside Wembley Stadium after witnessing Daniel Dubois dismantle Anthony Joshua in the latest shake-up of boxing's heavyweight division.

Except Fury had other things on his mind.

"Listen, that's cost me 150 million," Fury, scratching his head, shouted to a friend at ringside on Saturday night.

Maybe Fury vs. Joshua the long-awaited heavyweight fight that boxing's new overlords in Saudi Arabia had reportedly been planning might never happen.

Instead, it's Dubois, another British fighter, who has muscled his way onto the sport's top table.

Given his age, he could be there to stay.

The 27-year-old Dubois might have the boxing world at his feet after a brutal fifth-round knockout of Joshua that not only legitimized his status as the IBF titleholder but made plenty sit up and take notice.

That included Fury and Oleksandr Usyk, currently the two major powers



Anthony Joshua, left, and Daniel Dubois, fight in the IBF World Heavyweight bout at Wembley Stadium, in London, Saturday, Sept. 21, 2024.

Associated Press

among the heavyweights who are preparing for a rematch in Saudi in December and were seen joking around at ringside on Saturday. Usyk won their first fight in May to become the first undisputed heavyweight champion since 2000, but vacated his IBF belt in June. The wider plan was for Joshua to take on Fury report-

edly there was an agreement on a double-header for the sum Fury was talking about or to fight Usyk for a third time, having already lost twice to the Ukrainian. Now Joshua, outclassed by Dubois, looks to be out of the picture. Dubois is the main in waiting.

As for a potential Fury-Dubois fight, Frank Warren the

British promoter who represents both boxers said that would put him in a "very, very awkward position."

"It's not something I would push for," Warren said. "If there's an offer made that makes a lot of sense, then that's up to them."

More likely, then, is a rematch between Dubois and Usyk, especially if Usyk

beats Fury. That would put all belts on the table for another fight for the title of undisputed.

Usyk stopped Dubois in the ninth round when they fought in Poland in August last year, but only after controversially getting time to recover from what was adjudged a low blow by Dubois in the fifth round.

It sent Usyk to the canvas, where he sat against the ropes. Replays showed the punch hitting around Usyk's belt and Dubois still maintains he was robbed.

"I want to get my rematch," Dubois said of Usyk, "and put the wrong right."

There's video of Usyk and Dubois talking in the ring after their fight in Wroclaw, with Usyk telling his beaten challenger: "Daniel, you young. You can. You can dream."

Still, Usyk said after the Dubois-Joshua fight that he thought Joshua would win on Saturday.

"For me, it's a surprise," said the Ukrainian.

Usyk said he was only thinking about "Tyson Fury and the fight and of my family and preparation" when asked if he wanted to take on Dubois again. □

Reds fire manager David Bell after 6 seasons, name bench coach Freddie Benavides interim manager

By **MITCH STACY**
AP Sports Writer

CINCINNATI (AP) — The Cincinnati Reds fired manager David Bell on Sunday

night after six seasons.

The team announced the move hours after a 2-0 loss to the Pittsburgh Pirates, and named bench coach



Cincinnati Reds manager David Bell stands in the dugout during a baseball game against the Tampa Bay Rays, July 28, 2024, in St. Petersburg, Fla.

Associated Press

Freddie Benavides as interim manager for the final five games of the season.

"David provided the kind of steadiness that we needed in our clubhouse over the last few seasons. We felt a change was needed to move the Major League team forward. We have not achieved the success we expected, and we need to begin focusing on 2025," President of Baseball Operations Nick Krall said on a statement posted on the Reds' website.

With a week left in the season, the Reds are 76-81 and in fourth place in the NL Central, 13 1/2 games behind division champion Milwaukee. Cincinnati closes out the season with

five road games. The Reds have a two-game series in Cleveland on Tuesday and Wednesday before closing out the campaign with three games in Chicago against the Cubs.

The 52-year-old Bell whose grandfather Gus and father Buddy both spent part of their careers playing in Cincinnati was hired by the Reds in October 2018. He had a 409-456 record over six seasons.

Under Bell in 2020, the Reds earned a postseason berth in his second season, which was shortened by COVID-19 to 60 games.

The Reds finished the 2021 season with a respectable 83-79 record, good enough for third place in the Na-

tional League Central. That season also produced a National League Rookie of the Year in second baseman Jonathan India.

In 2022, Cincinnati lost 100 games for the first time in four decades. The Reds improved to 82-80 in 2023, despite leading the major leagues with 650 games missed by players because of injuries.

This season began with high expectations that Bell and the Reds couldn't meet. An eight-game losing streak in May put them five games under .500. They strung together seven wins in a row in June to get them back to one game under .500 but couldn't sustain the success. □

6 teams saved their season by avoiding an 0-3 start

By **ROB MAADDI**
AP Pro Football Writer

Six NFL teams saved their season on Sunday by earning their first win.

That's no overstatement considering only six teams since 1979 have made the playoffs after starting 0-3, including just one since 2000, and none have won a Super Bowl.

After the Ravens, Rams, Broncos, Colts, Giants and Panthers avoided that dreaded start, only the Titans are 0-3. The Jaguars and Bengals are winless going into Monday night. Jacksonville plays at Buffalo (2-0). Cincinnati hosts Washington (1-1).

Four of the six first-time winners on Sunday played on the road, including Lamar Jackson and the Ravens. They beat Dallas 28-25, holding on after Dak Prescott rallied the Cowboys back from a 22-point deficit in the fourth quarter.

The Ravens had the best record in the NFL last year but that didn't matter when they blew a double-digit lead in their home opener against the Raiders last week.

Facing a defense that was dominated by New Orleans in Week 2, Jackson, Derrick Henry and the rest of Baltimore's offense clicked. They scored four touchdowns on the first six possessions and built a comfortable lead.



New York Giants wide receiver Malik Nabers (1) catches a touchdown pass against the Cleveland Browns during the first half of an NFL football game, Sunday, Sept. 22, 2024 in Cleveland.

Associated Press

"To be honest, every game is a big game for us, because we're trying to get somewhere," said Jackson, who played like the reigning NFL MVP. "We've got to win these games to get to the playoffs, man, and win these playoff games to get to the Super Bowl. But it starts with the game that's in front of us. So, the 0-2 start, we didn't want that to happen. Obviously, it's the (National) Football League; everyone is good. We can't look at (any) opponent and think (that) we can just go in there and roll them over like this is high school or something or college, and we're

playing walk-on guys. ... They're going to play their heart out against us, like it's the Super Bowl, so we've just got to go out there and do what we're supposed to do."

The injury-depleted Rams, a playoff team last year, seemed headed for a third straight loss when they trailed the reigning NFC champion 49ers 24-14 midway through the fourth quarter. But Matthew Stafford led an improbable comeback, Kyren Williams ran 4 yards to score his third touchdown of the day with 1:51 remaining, and Joshua Karty hit a 37-yard field goal

with 2 seconds left to give Los Angeles a 27-24 win.

"I saw a team respond after a really humbling week last week," Rams coach Sean McVay said.

"And three hours will never define you, good or bad, unless you allow it to, and we've got to do a good job of being able to build on this."

The Broncos have plenty of reason for optimism after rookie Bo Nix led them to a stunning 26-7 rout in Tampa Bay against the previously unbeaten Buccaneers.

Nix completed 25 of 36 passes for 216 yards and ran for 47 yards and a score

as Denver dominated from start to finish. The Broncos aren't a playoff contender in the AFC West but Nix and a strong defense will keep them competitive while Sean Payton builds around them.

"I haven't seen him flinch," Payton said of his quarterback. "We all get a little bit more confident with the win but I say that respectfully. He hasn't flinched. I think that we had a good plan. The players did a good job and certainly (Nix) had more fun than he did in prior weeks."

The Giants also got a stand-out performance from a rookie first-round pick to secure their first victory. Malik Nabers had eight catches for 78 yards and two TDs in a 21-15 victory at Cleveland. Daniel Jones was terrific for New York, throwing for 236 yards and the two scores to Nabers.

"I think it always feels good to get a win, however it comes," Jones said. "First one is important, so we have to look at what we did well and build on it, and clean up the things we didn't do well."

A quarterback change helped the Panthers get coach Dave Canales his first win. Andy Dalton replaced Bryce Young, and threw for 319 yards and three TDs to lead Carolina to a 36-22 win in Las Vegas. □

Umpire Larry Vanover is retiring after big league career that started in 1991



Umpire Larry Vanover discusses a play during the seventh inning of a baseball game between the Tampa Bay Rays and Toronto Blue Jays, Sunday, Sept. 22, 2024, in St. Petersburg, Fla. Vanover is retiring.

Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — Umpire Larry Vanover plans to retire, ending a big league career that started in 1991.

Vanover's wife and son took out the lineup card to the pregame meeting at the plate before Sunday's game between the Toronto Blue Jays and Tampa Bay Rays.

The Kentucky-born Vanover, 69, was honored with a message on the scoreboard during the first inning and received an ovation from the fans.

His crew is not scheduled to work during the final week of the regular season.

Vanover worked in the South Atlantic League, Midwest League, Southern League, American Association, Pacific Coast League, International League and Venezuelan League.

He umpired his first big league game on June 25, 1991, working third base for the

Montreal Expos' game at the New York Mets, and joined the major league staff in 1993. He was among the 22 umpires who lost their jobs during a mass resignation in September 1999, then was among five rehired for the 2002 season.

On March 31, 2014, he made the first call in the history of expanded video review, confirming an out call at first base in the top of the fifth inning of the Pittsburgh Pirates-Chicago Cubs opener at Wrigley Field.

After serving as an interim crew chief in 2014, Vanover became a crew chief for the 2015 season.

Vanover worked the 2016 World Series and was behind the plate for the opener between the Cubs and Cleveland. His 2014 regular season concluded with plate duties in Derek Jeter's final game on Sept. 28, 2014, at Boston's Fenway Park. □